

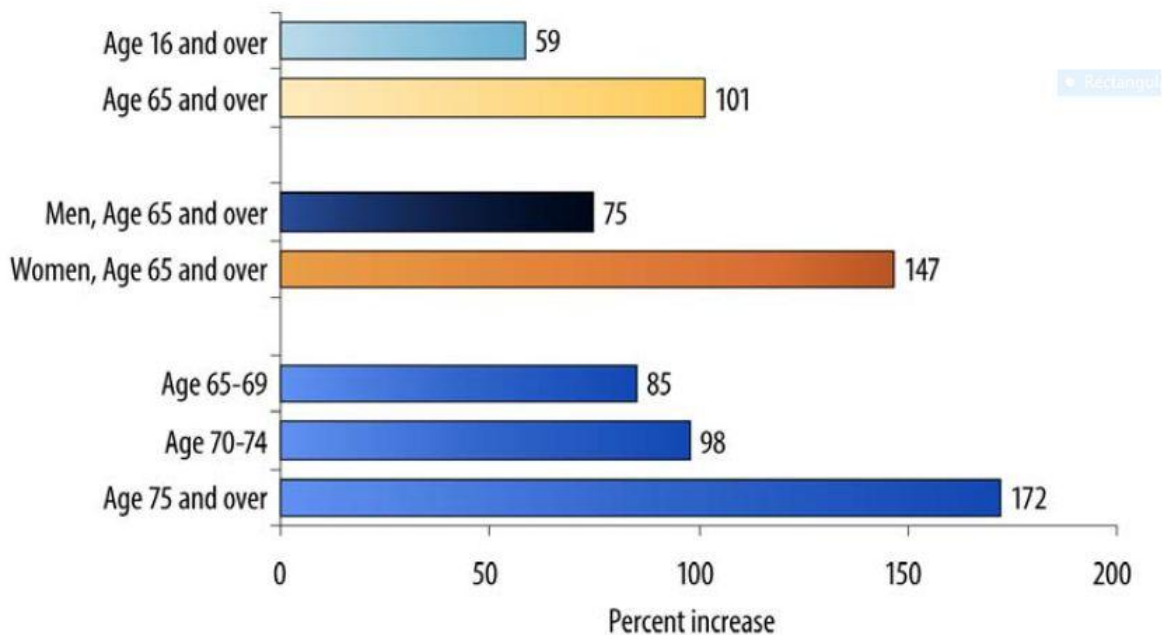
## Tips for the Mature Job Seeker

Members of the fifty-plus club may think that finding a new job is next to hopeless. But guess what? If you are among this crowd, you are in luck. Count your blessings that you are a mature worker, because believe it or not, your chances at landing a job are actually better than a younger candidate.

Between 1977 and 2007, employment of workers 65 and over increased 101 percent, compared to a much smaller increase of 59 percent for total employment (16 and over). The number of employed men 65 and over rose 75 percent, but employment of women 65 and older increased by nearly twice as much, climbing 147 percent. <sup>1</sup>

Looking ahead, by the year 2016, workers age 65 and over are expected to account for 6.1 percent of the total labor force, up sharply from their 2006 share of 3.6 percent. <sup>2</sup>

### Percent increase in employment by age and sex, 1977-2007



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

www.bls.gov

<sup>1</sup> United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *BLS SPOTLIGHT ON STATISTICS OLDER WORKERS*, July 2008. Web: 12 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2008/older\\_workers/](http://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2008/older_workers/)>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

While it may be natural for older job seekers to feel disadvantaged, being prepared for this gives you the upper hand during your search process and in the interview. (Yes, you will get the interview.)

Follow these tips and you will get there faster.

### **1. Understand where you fit.**

Before you learn that your new boss is the same age as your daughter, prepare yourself.

The generations:

- Mature: ..... Born before 1945
- Baby Boomer: .....1946 to 1964
- Generation X (or simply, Gen X): .....1965 to 1982
- Generation Y: .....1983 to 2000
- Generation Z: .....2001 and later

Knowing the traits of each generation will give you an advantage during the interview.

For example, the earlier you were born, the longer you are likely to stick with a job, you respect hierarchy and authority figures, you tend to like structure and rules, and are less mobile. Younger generations, on the other hand, have short-term loyalty, are more willing to relocate, value informality, embrace technology, but often require supervision.

### **2. Sell your maturity.**

Be proud of your experience; make it a strong selling point. I am not suggesting that you actually bring attention to the fact that you may be older than other candidates, but capitalize on the value of your wisdom and experience in cover letters, networking meetings and interviews. What the younger crowd only read about in textbooks or news media, you experienced firsthand. There is value in that, so use it.

### **3. Know your limitations.**

If you are a technophobic, take a class or buy a Dummies book. Brush up, but know your limitations and don't commit to more than you can deliver.

### **4. Exude optimism.**

Think positively and be optimistic. Walk into a networking meeting or an interview with the thought in the back of your mind that you have a disadvantage will definitely come across in mannerisms and body language.

### **5. Talk about your physical side.**

Do you use a gym? Play tennis? Swim? Run 5k?

Find a way (without overdoing it) to slip in references to your physical activities during your networking, and during interviews.

**6. Join mature job clubs.**

These may be clubs that no one ever wants to join, but it's all about helping each other.

One example is Forty-Plus, a New York nonprofit that has been around since 1939 helping mature job seekers hone skills needed to land jobs. Find mature job clubs in your area, and if there is no such club in your area, start one...!!!

**7. Lose the dates.**

Got your Bachelors degree in the seventies? Good for you, but you can leave the date of graduation off your resume. Just state: Bachelors in Business Management, Baruch College.

Have 40 years experience? List the last 15, and include highlights of the earlier 25 years in a section titled, Additional Experience.

**8. Sell your long haul interests.**

Younger people change jobs every few years, costing companies an enormous amount of money in hiring, training, and lost productivity. Use this to your advantage by selling yourself as a long-term hire.

**9. Maintain a sense of humor.**

Don't show a ho-hum look on your face. Don't carry a chip. Don't complain. Don't be resentful of interviewers that may be younger than you (assume they will be). Don't force your wisdom on the hiring manager, especially to the point of becoming argumentative about a topic.

Respect each other's age; the last thing a younger manager wants to hear is that she reminds you of your daughter.

Refrain from saying how "we used to do things."

**10. Put your age on the table.**

While the hiring manager cannot ask questions about your age, if you sense during an interview that your maturity may be an eliminating factor, bring it up yourself and highlight the positives. Here is one example: "I am sensing that there may be concerns about my age, but let me tell you how hiring someone like me is an advantage over younger applicants. I can assure you that there are no aspects of this position that I cannot handle, and I would be committed to bring you a wealth of education, training, and experience that many younger candidates could not equal."

**11. Re-career.**

Having difficulty finding employment in your field? This doesn't mean that you cannot find a job. If the industry you worked in for 30 years is in a deep slump with no signs of recovery in the near term, maybe it's time you re-tooled yourself and got out.

## 12. Update your image.

Simply put: don't look old. Don't show up for interviews or networking meetings with bifocals dangling from neck chains. Touch up some of that grey. Unless you're auditioning for a remake of Saturday Night Fever or an Elvis look-a-like gig, lose the pompadour.

## 13. Flip the criticism.

Should the hiring manager intimate that you may be over qualified, come right back by saying you are not over qualified, you are the best qualified. Then be prepared to follow-up immediately with, "Let me explain why."

## 14. Find a company or career that especially looks for older workers.

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that has been helping people age 50 and over since 1958. Despite that the acronym stands for American Association of Retired Persons, you don't have to be retired to be a member. Their job site maintains a list of the best employers for workers over 50, so give it a try.

Similarly, work with age-friendly recruitment agencies.

Chicago-based RetiredBrains.com ® maintains a job search board with senior opportunities nationwide. Another useful site is RetirementJobs.com. In the UK you can try wrinkliesdirect.org, and Adage.com.au is Australia's leading job search site for mature aged workers (aged 45+).

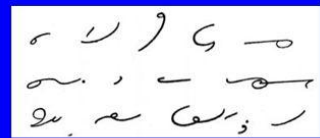
## 15. Use current buzz words.

It's the Internet, not World Wide Web or the Information Superhighway. It's a Smart phone, not a PDA. Slip in a reference to a current pop artist, even though you grew up on Lawrence Welk.

## 16. Brush-up on modern-day resumes.

- Remember it's a resume, not a memoir. List only the highlights, not each and every thing you did. If you are that accomplished, save the rest for your autobiography.
- List years, not months.
- Don't dare include a fax number - list only your cell number and email - and don't label them.
- Learn about keywords. Many resumes today are scanned for keywords.
- Tailor your resume to the opportunity; the days of one static resume are gone.
- Learn how to submit your resume on-line.

**Still listing Gregg or Pitman on your resume?**



## 17. Dress to impress.

Be conscious of your image and appearance. When you walk into a room, your appearance will speak before you do. Just because vintage styles can make a comeback, don't pull these items

out of your closet and wear them to an interview. When it comes to fashion, the past is often best left in the past; when certain styles do cycle back around, they almost always return with an updated cut and re-envisioned style.

**18. Consider consulting.**

While there may not be that many permanent jobs out there when you need them, there is still work to be done. Put your experience to work as a consultant. There are always companies that are buying what you are selling - knowledge, wisdom, and experience.

**19. Use your elevator speech to your advantage.**

Take control by anticipating the thoughts in the interviewer's mind and dismiss them with a killer elevator speech.

**20. Follow your instinct.**

Don't be afraid to walk away from an opportunity that just doesn't feel right. If you have doubts, it's not for you. You need a job, yes, but you've earned the right to decide if this position is the right one for you.



Population shifts have baby boomers turning 65 amidst a dwindling supply of younger workers, and you bring valuable traits to the table, including lower turnover, greater dependability, a stronger work ethic, and flexibility over work schedule and pay.



**You are NOT an older worker; you are a worker who just happens to be older.**

Tim Conway

vs.

Jack LaLanne



Go for it...!!!



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